

Pate for his great service and welcome him to the U.S. Congress.

IT IS TIME TO DEBATE THE REAL ISSUES AND STOP ENGAGING IN POLEMICS

(Mr. WALKER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, for much of this year this House has reverberated with speeches condemning fellow Members of Congress and other fellow figures. Many of those speeches have bordered on hate. Some people on my side of the aisle have used language against the President that has been inappropriate. On the minority side of the aisle, the speeches against the Speaker have been filled with venom.

The fact is that we are going to have political differences over issues and policies. We should debate vigorously those matters. But in the citadel of democracy there should be much more civility than we have seen this year.

Those of you who wanted the Committee on Ethics to report on the Speaker, they have. Can we now stop the personal vilification? Can the leadership on both sides of the aisle begin policing our own ranks to stop Members from using the House floor to vilify each other or express personal hatreds?

Many of us, myself included, have engaged in polemics on this floor. If what I have said in the past has been offensive to someone, then I intend to lower my voice and stick to debating the real issues, like balancing the budget. I would hope that others will do the same. It is time to stop anything that can be interpreted as meanness, venom, or hate.

WE CANNOT HAVE A DOUBLE STANDARD

(Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in somewhat response to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WALKER] and I agree with the hate and venom, but I want to point out that the gentleman from Florida [Mr. PETERSON] and I had a privileged resolution on this floor that had no hate or venom. It was rather innocuous, merely calling for a report from the Committee on Ethics.

That was voted down twice, without debate, on a motion to table. I am here really to point out to you the double standard, and I have a news release from the Speaker of the House in 1988 calling for a special counsel, in which he states that the outside counsel shall have full authority to investigate and present evidence and arguments before the Committee on Ethics concerning the questions arising out of the activities of House Speaker Jim Wright.

He goes on to say that the special counsel should have the right of sub-

poena and also states the committee shall not countermand or interfere with the outside counsel's ability to take steps necessary to conduct a full and fair investigation.

We cannot have a double standard, and that is all we ask for, Mr. Speaker.

WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE THE NATION'S PROBLEMS

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, for more than 13 months there has been an orchestrated campaign to demonize the Speaker. I think that this campaign that has gone on to try to destroy him is unfortunate. Of the 65 specific allegations that were made in the complaints to the Committee on Ethics about the Speaker, all were technically dismissed or fully dismissed except one.

Of that one, there has been a special investigator brought in to work with the subcommittee to look at that one narrow little charge, which a former IRS commissioner has already suggested to both the Speaker and others is no violation whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I think all of us have an obligation to ourselves and an obligation to this institution to be honest and to be forthright and to make sure that the integrity of the institution is maintained. The politicization of the Committee on Ethics over this last year I think is unfortunate, because these issues have been resolved by five Democrats and five Republicans working together, and together we can all continue to work to solve the Nation's problems.

BRING BIPARTISANSHIP BACK TO DELIBERATIONS

(Mr. FAZIO of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I spent 8 years on the Committee on Ethics and part of that time during the investigation of former Speaker Wright. I have not chosen to speak on the issue of the Speaker and his involvement with that committee until this very moment.

It seems to me that if we want to restore comity to the institution, to bring bipartisanship back to our deliberations, to take some of the poison out of the atmosphere, this issue needs to be resolved and fully resolved within the confines of that committee.

I have tremendous respect for the individuals who serve all of the institution by putting time in, together, day after day, in that room. But until the issue is resolved, because of the nature of the speakership, by an outside counsel, we will not be able to get beyond this very difficult point that we seem to be hung up on today, and have been, frankly, for most of this year.

I applaud the committee for finally taking the step of moving to instill more confidence in their deliberations. I do believe, however, that they must give the outside counsel the latitude to put to rest all the issues that have been raised. To do something other than that is to do different than we did when Speaker Wright was in the committee's deliberations, and would be, I think, unfortunately a truncated approach to getting this Congress beyond the cult of personality and back to work.

ETHICS PROCESS BEING ABUSED FOR POLITICAL GAIN

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, to compare the Wright investigation to the Gingrich investigation is like comparing a gnat to a hippopotamus.

Last night, the Ethics Committee unanimously dismissed 64 of 65 allegations against Speaker NEWT GINGRICH. Both Republicans and Democrats concluded that most of these charges were unwarranted, unnecessary, and not worthy of further investigation.

The 65th charge is narrowly focused on a technical tax law that requires an outside expert to investigate. And even this charge has been found to be baseless by a former commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

Let there be no mistake. This effort to destroy NEWT GINGRICH is not about finding the truth. It was not about discovering the facts behind his book deal. Those allegations were dismissed.

It was not about his college lectures. Those allegations were dismissed.

This is an effort to change the subject, as Republicans try to change the country for the better. At great expense and great fanfare, liberal Democrats have abused the ethics process for political gain.

PUTTING CREDIBILITY BACK INTO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(Mr. PETERSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, finally. Fourteen months we have waited patiently. We asked that we have a report. We asked the Committee on Ethics to do what it was supposed to do, to rule on the ethical conduct of its Members. That is its obligation.

We finally have them acting, and I applaud their action. And I applaud today some of the Members stepping forward and saying "Hey, this is a new day. Let's go forward with some bipartisanship." Let us stop the rancor on this floor. Let us put credibility back into this institution. But let us not forget that the Speaker is not immune to review from his ethical behavior.

Three guilty verdicts, one dismissed, one to be investigated, one pending. We are all in here together. The Committee on Ethics is our committee. It is a membership committee. It is our grand jury. I regret we have had to bring pressure to bear for them to act, to do what they were asked to do in the first place. This is a time to move forward in a more bipartisan and a more ethical process.

MORE IDEAS NEEDED FROM WHITE HOUSE ON BALANCING BUDGET

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, it is without venom or vitriol that I rise today to respectfully suggest that the major story in Washington yesterday took place not here, but at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, where the President of the United States again opted for showmanship over statesmanship, wielding Lyndon Johnson's pen from 1965, the pen LBJ used to sign the Medicare Act even as the current President was vetoing the Balanced Budget Act of 1995. And, in doing so, again the President opted for fear over facts, when he talked about nonexistent cuts in the Medicare budget. That simply was not true.

Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully suggest that the President of the United States and his Cabinet-level officials get out a sharpened pencil, instead of LBJ's pen, and go to work formulating a plan to get us to a balanced budget in 7 years, because a sharpened pencil is what American families use around the kitchen table to decide how they are going to spend money.

And, oh, yes, Mr. Speaker, one unintended act of symbolism: When the President reached for LBJ's pen, there was no ink in the well. There are no ideas coming from the White House, nor from the minority.

DEFENDING AMERICANS LOOKING FOR A BETTER LIFE

(Mr. GUTIERREZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, after the President's wise veto of the radical right budget, NEWT GINGRICH tried to bash the Great Society.

Well, I wonder if GINGRICH even wants a good society.

A good society protects the health and welfare of its most vulnerable—the Gingrich society hangs them out to dry.

But the Speaker thinks he can get away with that rhetoric since he used to be a history professor.

Well, let's talk history: the proud history of the Democratic party—and compare it with the sad history being written by today's GOP.

And the latest chapter: the Speaker's sharp rebuke by the Ethics Committee.

We Democrats are the party of FDR's New Deal that gave America economic security. Today's Republicans are the party of the Newt Deal—a shady book deal to give himself economic security. We are the party of Harry Truman who said the "Buck Stops Here." The Gingrich party tells GOPAC contributors "The Bucks better get here" if you want any help.

Democrats are the party of JFK's "Camelot"—today's Republicans are the party of "Scam-a-lot," as one Gingrich ethics scam after another comes to light.

Republicans try to defend the Speaker's millions in illegal contributions. We Democrats will defend millions of Americans looking for a better life.

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STRUGGLING OVER THE BUDGET

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, today is December 7 and we remember that this is Pearl Harbor day. It was the beginning of the World War II struggle in the Pacific. Today we are starting another struggle over the budget. The President's budget is now available. It is hot off the presses, and I am very optimistic. I hope it is as close to the 7-year Republican plan as the President's Medicare plan is to the Republican Medicare plan.

According to James Glassman of the Washington Post, the expenditures in the President's Medicare plan in 2002 is within 2 percentage points of the Republican plan, 1.6 percent, actually. I am sure all of us have heard about the massive \$270 billion cuts to Medicare. Well, the President's plan is within 2 percentage points.

Mr. Speaker, let us get to the truth of the matter. After all, telling the truth is one of the Ten Commandments. We should move beyond this cheap talk. If the President's plan is that close, 1.6 percent, then maybe we can reach an agreement on the 7-year balanced budget plan. Then we will do what the American public wants, what the Congress wants, we will do the right thing and balance the budget in 7 years.

UNITED NATIONS SEEKS PROTECTION FOR CROATIAN CURLY-HAIRED PIG

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, after an expensive study on endangered farm animals, the United Nations has determined that the world must protect the Croatian curly-haired pig. That is right, while millions are starving in Af-

rica, and many thousands are being slaughtered in Rwanda, the United Nations is immersed in animal husbandry.

If that is not enough to bust your chops, while the United Nations is studying the ham hocks of Croatian curly-haired pigs, with American tax dollars, I might add, American troops are landing in Bosnia.

Mr. Speaker, I say the United Nations has officially become the mother of all pork. I question on the House floor today, I want to know what they are using to smoke those hams with. I think they are using something that is an illegal contraband everywhere in the world.

With that, I yield back the balance of all of the rest of this pork. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker.

DEMOCRATS VOW TO GET EVEN WITH SPEAKER GINGRICH

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, remember back when Speaker Jim Wright had to resign from Congress due to his ethics problems? Remember when the Democratic whip, Tony Coelho, had to resign from Congress due to his ethics problems? Back in 1989 the Democrats held NEWT GINGRICH responsible for Wright and Coelho and vowed to get even with him, saying they would destroy GINGRICH if it is the last thing we do.

Well, we have to give the Democrats credit for trying to do just that. Majority whip Bill Alexander filed 467 ethics charges against Speaker GINGRICH in 1989. All charges were resolved. This year the Democrats filed 65 charges against Speaker GINGRICH and all but 1 has been resolved by the nonpartisan Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. The last charge involves a complex Tax Code which an outside counsel will look at.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to quit all these ridiculous character assassinations and get down to the legislative business at hand and work on balancing the budget.

EAST TIMORESE SUBJECT TO WORST HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE WORLD

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago today the small emerging nation of East Timor was brutally invaded by the nation of Indonesia. Over the past 20 years, the people of East Timor have been subject to some of the worst abuses of human rights in the world. More than 200,000 East Timorese, almost one-third of their entire population, have been killed or have died from starvation after being forced from their villages by Indonesia.